

From the Boston Daily Advertiser.
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I take pleasure in laying before our readers the following communication from the Hon. Samuel A. Eliot, Secretary of the Board of Prison Commissioners, in relation to the views of his office on the subject of the fugitive bill, which received his vote on its passage in the House of Representatives, in concurrence with the Senate, which body it originated. We trust his constituents and the public will do him the justice of giving it a careful perusal. They will perceive that he has not on this subject, as he is incapable of doing on thoughtlessly, or without reasons satisfactory to his mind, and such as are deserving of careful consideration. Those who may not agree with him in his conclusions will at least give him the credit of having acted independently, according to his own sense of public

HALE: The peculiar circumstances of the times, if my own position, induce me to ask of you the use of the columns of the Advertiser for a brief explanation of the reasons of the course I have recently pursued. I do it in the hope, and indeed in entire confidence, that my fellow citizens will be so far from regarding me as long enough, to enable them to believe the moment I am about to make, and that they will impute no sinister or ambitious motive for what may not meet with their approbation.

HALE: The rapid assistance attending the efforts of the present moment, that among the several acts of importance which have been brought to the notice of the great community of the North, the one which has roused all their life, and excited so much sympathy and interest, is the only one in regard to which there existed any constitutional obligation. All other questions were to be adjusted on considerations of prudence or expediency, but this upon the sense of justice. The feelings are, at all times, very bad, and the fact is, that the feelings are so bad, that it is imperative upon every one claiming to be a

ple, and with due reverence for the constitution, to side every impulse of mere feeling, and to consider fully his obligations to the government under which he lives.

In order to have a clear and just sense of the nature and weight of those obligations, I deem it necessary to refer a little to the history of the period when there was no constitution of the United States; to inquire what were the feelings and opinions of the time; what were the reasons for forming the constitution, and what alone it could be adopted. It is well known that the state of affairs, both at the North and the South, prior to the adoption of the constitution, was one of universal depression and misery. The period of the war between the States itself was a time of intense suffering. We have the exclusive possession of the home market, at least, and our own industry was supported by our consumption. But with peace came the introduction of foreign commodities, at such rates of duty as to give rise to a general feeling of discontent and abuse of principles; and, as we had little else than wheat and tobacco to pay with, we were compelled

our own markets with a very limited variety of goods, and thus depress the prices for selling, as well as for buying. People were poor, and, in some cases, miserable, to such a degree that the days of confederation between the close of the war and the adoption of the constitution are universally known of by historians, and were always described by me as the most miserable and most distressing period seen, as the darkest and most distressing period in history. Everybody saw and acknowledged the union of these sovereign and independent states into one government was the remedy, and the remedy, I thought, was to be found in the constitution. It was the way of such an experiment. It was a suicidal arrangement, embracing almost innumerable difficulties. But all might be arranged pretty well. Slavery had been abolished in some of the states, and still it was not collected in one. It was an incompensable incompatibility of interest. It mixed the wise men of that day—and they were very men—so much as this topic. At last they agreed a new constitution had been nothing to do with

that it should be left to the management and control of the States themselves to establish, retain, or abolish, just as much after the adoption of the constitution. But, in order to secure the existence of the Union, those States who preferred to give assent to the new Union, from which they were separated in one Commonwealth, and found in another, were to be returned to the State from which they had fled. Provision was necessary for the preservation of this act *in statu quo*. It did not extend to slavery; it kept there as it already was, and whither could not have gone, if every slave who escaped to the North was to be free and irrecalable. The members of the slavery from the South saw this distinctly, and duly declared that they could not and would not enter into such a Union. The Northern States, however, with the prospect of immediate and permanent emancipation, and the provision of the constitution for restoring fugitive slaves was a conservative measure only. It simply did not touch the question of slavery, and it is not probable that such would have been, by nearly as early

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left to us the inestimable inheritance of a wisely-
and balanced government, to which we have
inherited so many principles, and which we
inherit from the wisdom and the prospect of greater
success with all advancing time, if we will
maintain it in its original proportions.

I only did our fathers bequeath us this glorious com-
mon, but the precious inheritance of their fame, their
virtue, their valor, their patriotism, their great
reliance on the wisdom of their great leader, "the first in
the hearts of his countrymen." I shall not attempt a suc-
cessful reverend name: it is not necessary. Not a tra-
dition in America that does not cherish his renown
as a large part of the national glory, or that does not fore-
tell his honor as the glory of the future. But there
of late years sprang up parties who have so far mis-
treated, or forgotten, or disregarded the compact of
fathers as to introduce into the discussions of politi-
cians in the government of the United States, a
topic which was excluded from the constitution, and
which the government acting as a
body has no power, and who, assuming a respon-

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the reverse of what I might have expected. I observe an intemperance of language, which not usually accompany wisdom—a profusion of all consequences, which is not commonly seen as the mark either of good judgment or of good temper. With such parties I cannot get. I believe in wisdom in the provisions of the constitution. I believe in the propriety of uniting civilly and heartily, certain political ends not otherwise to be obtained. Those who think themselves justified in holding this. I am not willing to renounce my share in the